

Music, Ripped Off

To the Editor:

Kevin Kelly ("Making My Own Music," Op-Ed, Oct. 12) says he can download music from the Internet without breaking the law. While consumers can share music or movies they create themselves, the courts have held in copyright cases that using peer-to-peer services like Napster to download copyrighted music is illegal. These sites facilitate the distribution of others' copyrighted content without permission.

And while I agree that copyright extension delays a work from becoming public, saying that this harms consumers is misguided. If consumers can distribute others' content free of charge, the actual creators will have no incentive to develop original works. If studios lose money and make fewer movies, what will be available for "film buffs, powered only by passion" to digitize?

As a consumer, I support fair use. But fair use needs limits to ensure that creators receive their fair share of the profits from their efforts.

JOHN CONYERS JR.

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